



Project-Based Learning Implementation Planner

Use this planner to prepare with program staff before you begin a project with students. It will help you make sure that you have considered all of the areas needed to make a project successful.

This planner includes the following sections. Check off the box for each one when you have completed the items in the section below.

- ☐ Overall Program Goals for Using PBL
- ☐ Scheduling PBL
- ☐ Planning for Youth Participation
- ☐ Demonstrating and Documenting Learning
- ☐ Budgets
- ☐ Engaging Partners, Families, and Volunteers
- ☐ Training.

1. Overall Program Goals for Using PBL

Using Project-Based Learning as a program approach has many benefits, and can help programs meet overall goals such as improving academic skills. Be sure all projects across the year – short- and long-term, with different groups and topic areas – contribute to meeting the long-term goals. Clarify and discuss goals with staff and stakeholders to ensure everyone understands what PBL will achieve. Before starting a project, decide what overall program goals will be met:

- ☐ Support and expand academic skills (e.g., core literacy, math, science, content knowledge) in a hands-on way.
- ☐ Keep children interested in the program; improve students' attendance and retention.
- ☐ Build children's 21st century skills.
- ☐ Excite and engage staff; develop staff leadership as dynamic, effective afterschool educators.
- ☐ Connect the program and the children with community organizations, community leaders, and local issues.
- ☐ Other: _____



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2. Scheduling PBL

Determine when, how often, and over what period of time PBL will fit into the program schedule. Use a calendar such as the one below to plan a project schedule. Be sure to make adjustments as necessary after the project begins.

Project Title: _____

Grades: _____

Project Description: _____

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:
2	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:
3	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:
4	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:	Hours needed: Project Stage*: Activities:

Project stages may include: topic brainstorming, developing a driving question, research and investigation, culminating event, assessment and reflection, or others you create.



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3. Planning for Youth Participation

The number of children and youth participating in projects as well as the type and complexity of projects impacts operations and management. The items below will help you to plan for a project based on the number of youth and the populations you serve.

Total number of youth participating: _____

Grades and/or ages: _____

If mixed grades, how will you ensure all youth are challenged? _____

Population served:

- ☐ English language learners
- ☐ Special needs students
- ☐ Students who struggle academically
- ☐ Other: _____

For any populations selected above, what is your plan for supports before/during/after the project? Will you need to reach out to teachers or parents? Are any special supplies needed?

Attendance and participation

Is participation mandatory? Yes ___ No ___

Is attendance or participation in projects recorded? Yes ___ No ___

Is participation level or attendance part of assessment or documentation? Yes ___ No ___

Number of projects

- ☐ All participants on one project.
- ☐ Participants in committees or groups for subparts of a project.
- ☐ Each individual on a separate project.
- ☐ Small groups or committees on separate projects.

Location

- ☐ All project work on-site.
- ☐ Some project work on-site, some off-site.
- ☐ Most or all project work off-site.
- ☐ Transportation, security, and permissions needed.

Other notes:



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4. Demonstrating and Documenting Learning

Plan ahead and make sure that you have a plan for how learning will be documented, assessed, and demonstrated before a project begins. Choose a few of the options below and make sure they are developed and shared in advance. You may need to consult with students' teachers.

- ☐ Rubric for:
 - ☐ Participation during the project
 - ☐ Final product
 - ☐ Academic and 21st century skills gained
- ☐ Pre and post-test
- ☐ Daily or weekly student journal
- ☐ Group discussion or reflection activity
- ☐ Other

5. Budgets

Consider potential cost of projects. If project choices need budget or cost parameters, present that up front. Children and staff may have ideas about how to raise funds, find partners, or modify activities.

Item	Number	Unit Cost	Total
Transportation			
Project Materials Allowance Books, notebooks, guides Copies Supplies Incentives Other			
Culminating Event Space Materials, supplies Refreshments Other			
Training Staff training Volunteer, partner training			
Other			



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6. Engaging Partners, Families, Volunteers

Which community partners might be resources for your work? How?

- ☐ Businesses: _____
- ☐ Professionals: _____
- ☐ Organizations: _____
- ☐ Colleges, universities: _____
- ☐ Hospitals, clinics: _____
- ☐ Local schools: _____
- ☐ Other: _____

Are volunteers needed to support PBL efforts? _____

If so, where might they be found? _____

When and how will you contact them? _____

How, when, and what will you communicate with students' families?

- ☐ Early-information letters, e-mails, texts, or phone calls
- ☐ Surveys for project ideas
- ☐ Permissions
- ☐ Invitations to participate in implementation
- ☐ Updates on progress
- ☐ Invitations to culminating event
- ☐ Post-project surveys
- ☐ Other:



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7. Training

On which topics do staff need training?

- ☐ Understanding PBL
- ☐ Planning and implementing PBL
- ☐ Devising culminating events, demonstrating learning, documenting learning
- ☐ Facilitating youth voice and choice
- ☐ Supporting youth working in groups.
- ☐ Identifying specific content or skill areas
- ☐ Other

How much time is available, and when, for staff training?

- ☐ During orientation
- ☐ During staff meeting time
- ☐ During program breaks
- ☐ In conjunction with school-day teacher professional development
- ☐ At conferences
- ☐ In professional development sessions scheduled during the year
- ☐ Other:

Topic	Date	Time	Participants	Leaders